

# *The Crescent*

PACIFIC COLLEGE

FEBRUARY 1911

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# **THE CRESCENT**

VOL. XXII.

FEBRUARY, 1911

NO. 5

### **A Dramatist That Rivals Shakespeare.**

Alexander Hull

I have often felt and frequently—after my habit—have expressed the idea that Shakespeare has been to the English-speaking peoples almost as much of a menace in one way as he has an inspiration in another. And as often as I have uttered the idea I have found it an exceedingly unpopular one. It was, perhaps, four years ago that I first ventured, at a boarding house table surrounded by some eight or ten people, to indulge in literary criticism on this question. I had scarcely launched myself upon the placid waters of exposition before an elderly lady, taking advantage of her sex and her seniority, remarked in a disgusted tone (and, may I say, impolite manner) that I made her very tired, that she had noticed all young men of my age just out of college thought themselves privileged to talk in that same way, and that probably my exceedingly immature view of the question would be changed by the time I had grown old enough to have any judgment. Now there is nothing in the world that insults me quite as much as that vi-



cious habit of judging my intellectual capabilities by my years. But what could I say? Yet my views have *not* changed; perhaps because I have not lived long enough. But now I have my chance. Not one of you can answer me back, at least not *this* month. And after that I do not care—I will likely have another hobby by that time.

But the menaces that Shakespeare has offered us have, of course, been quite unwitting on his part. There are, I think, a number of them but the one that above all others has impressed me has been the absolute neglect of other playwrights that his plays have caused. He has incontestably narrowed us. If no other writer were worth the reading that were well and good, but that happens not to be the case. The ordinary person is pitifully unaware of the existence of any dramatist aside from him—or might as well be as far as any acquaintance with their work is concerned. He ranks his Shakespeare next his Bible—and there is no third. And worst of all, to think otherwise is heresy.

First of all we may as well admit that the “immortal sweet William” is not absolutely faultless. I have been blamed for being destructive. But when so many millions of people are singing his praise I feel it only fair to even the balances. To begin with his plays are in some instances amazingly silly with their “fa, la, la’s” and “fee fo fi fums.” Do not think I do not realize the limitations of his times and his audiences. The playgoer of the time demanded a certain amount of that—and he got it—at the expense of the play. But is there really any reason why we should not judge Shakespeare by the same absolute standard which we apply to other writers? There are so many who will point you his beauties—and so few to mention his faults. I have al-

ways had a shrewd idea that most of the people like his plays because they thought they ought to—because, with the very few faults one can find in them considered, they are still superlatively good and I *know* the great majority do *not really* enjoy that kind of things. And yet his plays are not one half so silly (in their few silly places) as people’s interpretation of them. I remember that one day a professor of mine had just finished reading a passage from “Launcelot and Elaine” in the most inanely idiotic tone of voice, with the intention of over emphasizing its sentimentality. He looked at me with a serene consciousness of the success of that effort, and said “Now isn’t that silly?” But it made me wildly angry for a moment. “It certainly is,” I answered, “anything would be if you read it like that!” It was inexpressibly rude but true.

Shakespeare is a wonderful painter with words—so much so that he has apparently sometimes lost himself in the mere pleasure of their sound, a proceeding that may make interesting reading, even literature, but that certainly makes poor drama. Consequently many of his plays are far better literature than plays, and, again consequently, only a limited number of them ever see the light of publicity on the boards.

His few anachronisms and errors in place or natural history are worthy only a passing notice yet in the technic of the drama many a modern playwright can and does put him to shame. But, when all has been said, Shakespeare brooks but few rivals. Of the three who come most forcibly to my mind, who have worked on a comparable sphere, I wish to dwell upon but one, the greatest modern dramatist, if not the greatest dramatist of all times, whose Titanic power, absolute mastery of form and awful aloofness place him at once



with those giants of old, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Hendrik Ibsen: who not only revolutionized the drama and laid the way for every serious effort in that field since his time but single-handed by those same plays revolutionized Norway, his native land, and brought her from the mists and shadows of mediaeval tradition into the light of the present day.

If you think seriously of the stage action you cannot fail to see that Shakespeare's raging battles and cumbersome action are obsolete, that his very themes are antique; literary, yes,—but in comparison with the steady, powerful, inevitable flow of those plays of Ibsen, almost undramatic. With themes that concern us here and now, not themes that merely awaken an historic or literary passing interest; with language that you yourself might have used yesterday; with no reliance upon pompous and grandiose heroes, sweet ladies or gentle knights, these plays of Ibsen, laid with a master-painter's hand upon the dramatic canvas grip our heads and our hearts, lay bare our very souls and stir as nothing else, I verily believe, ever has or will upon the stage. And yet how many of you know him?

There never was another man whose writings had such an effect upon his people as this man's. He is unique. One after another those plays in his hands flayed and scourged his people until they howled with rage. They practically exiled him. And then from his exile in Italy he exposed their hypocrisy and meanness, their pride and boasting; never angrily, always calmly and impersonally: but there was a force in those clarion trumpet tones that waked them from their lethargy, and roused them from their shame. Today his name is honored and revered throughout Norway; honored, not loved. He sat, too stern a judge over his people, to be

loved. Yet I think he chose the better part; no popular writer could ever have done so great a work.

As to his plays, I wish you might, every one of you, know at least a few of them. In any large library they are all accessible and even here a few of them may be had. His earliest ones are tales of the Vikings, very romantic and utterly different from those later works founded upon social questions and psychological. Even these earlier plays (*The Vikings at Helgeland*; *The Pretenders*; *Lady Inger and the Feast at Solhoug*) are strangely interesting and admirably constructed. These, with *Love's Comedy*, were written prior to 1864. Following them came *Brand* and the celebrated *Peer Gynt*. Then the social plays and lastly the psychological. Of course this division is arbitrary. The order is as follows,—*The League of Youth*; *Emperor and Galilean*; *Pillars of Society*; *A Doll's House*; *Ghosts*; *An Enemy of the People*; *The Wild Duck*; *Rosmersholm*; *The Lady from the Sea*; *Hedda Gabler*; *The Master Builder*; *Little Eyolf*; *John Gabriel Borkman* and last, in 1899, *When We Dead Awaken*. In spite of the confining of characters, in a great measure, to small, provincial Norwegian towns they find their counterparts in every civilized land and make a universal appeal. The plays have been translated into every important language—even into Japanese.

Which of them all is the most striking I would not undertake to say. *Peer Gynt* is undoubtedly the most widely known. Candor compels me to say that some of you will not like them at all, that some of them will horrify you, that some of them you will not understand. And yet I hope that you will all try to read at least a few of them. We are hopelessly narrow in this country from a literary standpoint. Ibsen's lyric poems are



very beautiful, too, but unfortunately I do not know of an English translation and was forced to read them myself in the German. But by all means read something! You owe it to yourselves to have an acquaintance, let it be ever so slight, with this mighty dramatist, of whom the very least we can say is that he is unquestionably the greatest dramatist since Shakespeare.

### **The Problem of Two Civilizations.**

(Oration winning second place in local oratorical contest.)

**I**N a democratic government the key note to success and prosperity is the education of its citizens. If we are to lead the nations in progress, it is necessary for us to educate and bring to a higher plane of civilization, not only the rich and favored but also the poor, the ignorant, the ones who have been imposed upon, those who have not had a chance to rise. All our inhabitants must be made interested and intelligent citizens.

We have in our midst a race which if educated as it should be, would be an important factor in the progress of our nation, but, if allowed to drift as they have been, will be an eternal hinderance to us. I refer to the black race—the American negro.

In 1619 twenty colored people were landed in our country to be sold as slaves. From that time to this there has been a continual increase of the black race within our borders until at present there are 10,000,000 colored people in the United States.

Today we are confronted with the problem of our relation with, and duty toward, this race. In the consideration of this question, we must keep in mind two

things. In the first place we know that the two races must occupy this country jointly, and in the second place that the progress of one race is dependent on that of the other.

The American negro is now at a stage when the white man can shape his destiny or future. Is it not our duty as a Christian nation to see that he gets the proper training?

Our first question before we begin to help the negro must be: Is he capable of progressing under proper guidance, if so what shall we do to help him? Another question would be: How shall we manage so that the negro race and our own may live side by side in peace?

We do not have to look to the great men of the negro race for examples of capability. Let us see whether the negro as a business man has improved his condition within the past fifteen or twenty years. About fifteen years ago a negro started a grocery store in Montgomery with a capital of ninety dollars. This same man has built up his business until at present it is paying forty thousand dollars a year.

Let us look for other examples showing capabilities. In 1900 there were only two negro banks, at present there are fifty. In a southern city, ten years ago, negroes were not taken into consideration in the business life. At present they own, one-third of the town, one hundred business enterprises, and are depositing money in the banks regularly. A town in Mississippi has a negro mayor, has negro policemen and councilmen and is very successful. We find a Richmond bank in which all the officers are negro women. There is a negro Wall Street broker. In fact there are successful negroes in most any business enterprise that we might mention.



Thus we see that the black race is fully capable of doing great things.

We know that the negroes' benefit is our gain. He uses the same roads, rivers and market places that we do, so we see that his interest is ours.

The colored people own one-eighth of the farms of the United States. It is a fact that the average crop of the negro farmer is worth only three hundred and fifty dollars, while that of the white farmer is worth one thousand dollars. Therefore it is necessary that the negro farmer should be educated so that the land may bring forth its best.

The negro race should help the South to advance rather than to hold it back. The South at one time had a wonderful influence. By helping their colored neighbors they may regain their lost prestige.

Many of the Southern white people have found that the success of the South lies in making a better man of the black, and this can be done only by educating him mentally as well as morally.

Let us see what is being done for the negroes' education. In the average community we find that they have only one to five months of school a year. If longer the teacher devises some plan of raising money. This is seldom done except by negro teachers.

Let us compare this state of affairs with that in Macon County, Alabama. In this county, the children are taught not only the regular studies but also gardening and farming.

The life of the community centers around the school and the work of the school has a great influence upon the surrounding country. Naturally, the white people see the benefit of education. It is a fact that in an educated community, there are fewer criminals, the land is more valuable, and the races are friendly.

Seven million negro children are growing up in ig-

norance. Are we to stand by and let this state of affairs continue? No. Such an action would be far from what would be expected of a Christian nation.

It is necessary that a person should come in contact with people of the world in order that he may become a good citizen. We hear of endowments being given to the rich colleges where none but the moneyed people may attend. Would it not be better if some of our rich people would turn their attention to the South and work for the uplift of the American negro? This educational training is necessary for national prosperity.

Just as we found it necessary to educate the people in the Phillipines in order that those islands might prosper, so in the United States we find it necessary to educate the weaker members of our great family in order that we may obtain greater prosperity.

Booker T. Washington says: "The success of our race will be in proportion to the service that it renders to the world." Thus we find that the colored people who attend Fisk University and Tuskegee go there with the intention of obtaining an education so that they can help their race and in so doing benefit the nation. By making themselves useful the negroes find that there is a chance for them to rise.

We generally form our opinions of the black race from reading newspaper accounts, wherein only half the truth is told. The Springfield riot, of 1908, is a good example of this. In this riot one negro committed a crime. The whites were not able to get at him so turned on the whole black race which of course was innocent. Fifty houses were burned. Two thousand negroes fled from the city so that they might find a place of refuge. Mr. Chafin, the Prohibition candidate for the Presidency, was injured while defending an innocent black. The mayor of the city was roughly handled when he attempted to protest. An old negro was taken



from his home, beaten and hanged; the charge was that he had a white wife. We see by these instances that there is not only a low class of blacks that needs to be reformed, but that there is also a low class of whites which needs the same training. This work must be done by the law abiding citizens.

In the determination of the progress of the black race and of the relations between the two peoples, the upheavals of today must not alone decide the question but a comparative study should be made to see whether these outbreaks are not becoming less frequent and violent.

The negro judges his white neighbor just as we judge him. He finds that a man who is kind to the negro race is in nearly every case considered one of the best citizens of the community.

Dr. Curry, a former United States minister to Spain, has said that he has never helped a negro man, woman, or child but what he was made stronger and better for it. This man, shortly after the close of the Civil war, was not in favor of negro education, but when he visited some of the Southern schools and found what a hard time the colored people were having to get an education, he sympathized with them and ever afterward worked for the uplift of the American negro.

In slavery the whites thought that it was to their advantage to keep the negro in ignorance. Now that they have liberty, it is plainly seen that it is to the whites' interest to so educate the negro, that poverty and crime may finally be eliminated from the black race. Liberty exists only where the weakest as well as the strongest people are happy.

Let us strive for the uplift of the American negro, for in so doing we will not only lift the black race to a higher civilization, but we will be helping our nation to prosper.

Olin C. Hadley '14.

## THE CRESCENT.

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College atmosphere is a compound formed of various simples. Temperament of professors and students, buildings and student activities are usually thought to make up the bulk of it. Yet there is one factor which most certainly contributes something and which is pretty generally ignored. We mean the influence of natural surroundings. No one can doubt that, consciously or unconsciously, the scenery which a man looks upon every day makes its mark upon his personality. A certain professor who was very morbid attri-



buted his condition of mind to the dullness and flatness of the land surrounding his university. The case is, no doubt, extreme but it illustrates the fact that the natural surroundings make their impression upon the university or college as well as upon the individual. In respect to this phrase of "atmosphere" Pacific College is indeed favored. Although not surrounded by tourist-drawing wonders, we are under the spell of fir-clad hills which would cure rather than cause any feelings of morbidity. But to receive full benefit of the hills, and rivers, and trees there must be something more than unconscious reception of their influence; we must study them, think about them, ramble on the hills, and row upon the river. The lines of the college song, "Close beside Chehalem Mountain" and "Near the old Willamette's banks" should be no empty phrases for us.

### Athletics.

#### PREPS VS LAFAYETTE

The Preps were defeated by the Lafayette town team at Lafayette, Friday, January 6, 34-31. The boys were not used to such a small floor and were greatly handicapped. Prof. Johnson took the following; Hadley, Parker, Pearson, Benson, Haworth, Kyes.

Referee, Johnson.

#### P. C. 28, NEWBERG AMATEURS 12

The first game of the season was played on Friday, January 13, with the Newberg Amateurs. In the first half Pacific seemed to have trouble in passing and hitting baskets. Score at end of first half, 8-6 in favor of the Amateurs. In the second half Pacific warmed up

and played rings around the Amateurs. Lewis did some pretty shooting for Pacific getting six baskets.

Line-up:

P. C.	N. A.
Smith..... f	Larkin
Lewis (Capt.)..... f	(Capt.) Miller
Pearson..... c	Henry
Armstrong..... g	Fendal
Rasmussen..... g	Hollingsworth

Referee, Reagan.

#### MCMINNVILLE 32, PACIFIC 21

On January 27 McMinnville College defeated us on our own floor. Pacific started with a jump and scored 11 points before McMinnville woke up. After that McMinnville scored steadily throughout the game. The score at the end of the first half was 14-12 in Pacific's favor. Eckman and J. Foster did some pretty basket-shooting for the visitors while Smith and Lewis were the stars for Pacific.

Line-up:

Pacific	McMinnville
Smith..... f	B. Foster
Lewis, Hadley..... f	Echman
Pearson..... c	J. Foster
Armstrong..... g	Pettit
Bensen, Lewis, Haworth.. g	Sebly

Referee, Reagan,

Timekeeper, Stanbrough,

Scorer, Kyes.

#### PACIFIC VS MCMINNVILLE

Owing to the disabled condition of the team Pacific was defeated by McMinnville February 11. Lewis and



Rasmussen were not able to accompany the team while Smith and Armstrong were not feeling much better. McMinnville started scoring and were never in any danger. Despite Smith's and Armstrong's condition they played a star game for Pacific, Smith getting all of Pacific's points. This game could have been postponed if the proper measures had been taken in the first place so we hope this will not occur again.

Line-up:

Pacific		McMinnville
Smith (Capt.) .....	f .....	(Capt.) W. Foster
Parker .....	f .....	Eckiman
Pearson .....	c .....	Woody
Armstrong .....	g .....	Culver, Selby
Benson, Haworth .....	g .....	Pettit
Referee, Van Osdel of McMinnville.		

### Locals.

The members of the Senior Academy Class have donned new sweaters which show up their class colors of old rose and silver gray.

Miss Nell Reuter entertained the Sophomore class and inmates of the dormitory at her home Friday evening, January 6th. Each person took something he did not want and profitable exchanges were made. Interesting games were played and dainty refreshments served. All decided it was one of the most interesting and enjoyable events of the season.

Tuesday, December 13, Prof. Johnson preformed some interesting chemical experiments in chapel.

A change in chapel song books has been made and the new ones seem to be very satisfactory.

Mrs. Hodgins. Clifford, when you look to the north at night what do you see?

Clifford. Stars.

The Freshman Class accompanied by Prof. Weesner spent the evening of January 13th at the home of Daisy Newhouse at Springbrook.

Levi T. Pennington, of Richmond, Indiana, led chapel and visited classes Tuesday, January 24. In his chapel talk he told how the attributes implied by having the face of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle are needed in every life to make a perfect minister of God.

Rev. Phelps, who has been conducting evangelistic services at the M. E. church, spoke in chapel January 26th.

Basket-ball practice has been seriously handicapped by the sickness of two members of the first team.

Mrs. Hodgins read in two chapel periods a delightful little book on James Whitcomb Riley entitled "In Lock-  
erbie Street."

On the afternoon of February 8, the Y. W. C. A. girls gave a social in honor of Miss Hopkins, the Northwest student secretary of the Y. W. C. A. Earlier in the day she addressed the students in chapel.

Victor Rees has been seriously ill with the measles but is rapidly recovering.

Jack to Jean. "Ah! I wasn't looking at you but at Mt. Hood."

The Second basket-ball team defeated the High School Second team 18-13.

(Overheard.) "I can't have the boy I want; Oh, my! but boys are the worst things anyhow—"

On the evening of January 26, the local oratorical



contest was held in the college chapel, Claude Newlin winning first place. His oration, "The Ministry of Poetry" showed good thought and was well delivered. Olin Hadley won second place on "The Problem of Two Civilizations." Olin handled his oration very well. On account of its not being compulsory for college students to write orations this year, the Junior class did not have a representative.

### Exchanges.

*The Maroon*, Tacoma, Wash., is our latest exchange. The literary department deserves special mention.

*The Nugget*, Baker, Ore. Your literary department is good, but don't you think that ads in the front of the paper detract from the general appearance.

*The Review*, for January contains an excellent article on the life of Mark Twain.

*Penn Chronicle*, Oskaloosa, Iowa. On the whole your paper is well balanced. We might suggest a new cover design.

*Crimson and Gray*, you have a good paper but we do not like to see ads in the front of the paper.

*Whims*, Seattle, Wash. You are to be congratulated upon your different departments and stories. Your debate number is fine.

*The Cardinal*. You show a commendable spirit on your literary department. Your poem, "My Duty," shows you have the right spirit.

*News*. Your class notes and exchange department are fine. Your editorial on "Bettie's Poetry" is to be commended.

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